

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJECT: PEI PROVINCIAL ELECTION CALLED FOR
APRIL 24, 1978

1. EVENING OF MARCH 28, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND PREMIER
ALEX CAMPBELL (L) ANNOUNCED THAT PROVINCIAL ELECTION
WILL BE HELD APRIL 24, 1978. ANNOUNCEMENT FOLLOWED
PRESENTATION OF 1978 BUDGET TO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
BY FINANCE MINISTER BENNETT CAMPBELL EARLIER IN DAY.

2. ALEX CAMPBELL, 44, HAS HELD PREMIERSHIP SINCE
JULY 11, 1966 WHEN LIBERAL PARTY WON 17 OF 32 SEATS IN
GENERAL ELECTION FOR LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. MAJORITY
INCREASED TO 27 OUT OF 32 SEATS IN MAY 11, 1970
ELECTION. LAST ELECTION, HELD APRIL 29, 1974, GAVE
LIBERALS 26 OUT OF 32 SEATS. CAMPBELL IS FIRST ISLAND
PREMIER TO SEEK FOURTH TERM.

3. J ANGUS MACLEAN, 63, BECAME HEAD OF PEI
PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY AND PROVINCIAL
OPPOSITION LEADER ON SEPT 25, 1976. PRIOR TO ENTRY
INTO PROVINCIAL POLITICS, HE WAS FEDERAL MP FOR
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MALPEQUE RIDING FOR 25 YEARS (1951-1976), SERVING AS
FEDERAL MINISTER OF FISHERIES IN DIEFENBAKER GOVT
(1957-63).

4. PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVES ARE EXPECTED TO CAMPAIGN
ON THEME OF MAKING PROVINCE MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT AND
LESS DEPENDENT ON OTTAWA. LIBERALS WILL STAND ON

THEIR 12-YEAR RECORD AND PERSONAL POPULARITY OF
PREMIER CAMPBELL.

5. PRE-ELECTION BUDGET PRESENTED BY FINANCE MINISTER
BENNETT CAMPBELL FORCASTS CDOLS 4 MILLION DEFICIT
WITH EXPECTED REVENUES OF CDOLS 260.5 MILLION AND
EXPENDITURES OF 264.5 MILLION. BUDGET IS UP 10.3 PER
CENT OVER 1977. NO NEW TAXES WILL BE INTRODUCED. OTHER
HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- INCREASED FUNDS FOR FARM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM,
- ASSISTANCE TO FISHERMEN IN VESSEL CONSTRUCTION,
ONSHORE FACILITIES, AND ENTERPRISES DEVELOPMENT,
- ADDITIONAL MONEY AND LEGISLATION TO SUPPORT
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN SMALL COMMUNITIES
AND CONTINUED CONSTRUCTION OF INDUSTRIAL PARKS
AND MALLS,
- CDOLS 4.7 MILLION FOR ADDITIONS TO TRANS-CANADA
HIGHWAY RECONSTRUCTION,
- ESTABLISHMENT OF METALS TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT CENTER,
- NEW VOCATIONAL SCHOOL COURSES IN FARMING, FISHING,
AND SMALL BUSINESS.

PROVINCIAL GOVT INTENDS TO BORROW CDOLS 25 MILLION
DURING YEAR THROUGH PUBLIC BOND ISSUES.

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6. COPIES OF BUDGET WILL BE POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT AND
EMBASSY AS SOON AS RECEIVED.

7. COMMENT: PEI PROVINCIAL ELECTION WILL BE FOUGHT ON
LOCAL ISSUES. DESPITE ITS COMING IN ONE OF THE TWO
REMAINING LIBERAL PARTY GOVERNED PROVINCES (OTHER IS
NOVA SCOTIA) BEFORE THE NATIONAL VOTING, ITS OUTCOME
SHOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE INTERPRETED AS A GUIDE TO WHAT MAY
HAPPEN IN THE FEDERAL ELECTION. NATIONAL UNITY AND STATE
OF NATIONAL ECONOMY WILL BE OF FAR LESS CONCERN TO
PEI VOTERS THAN THEIR OWN ISSUES OF LAND USE, FARMING,
FISHERIES, AND SMALL BUSINESSES. PREMIER CAMPBELL IS
VERY ABLE AND POPULAR POLITICIAN. DESPITE BEST EFFORTS
OF ANGUS MACLEAN TO FIND ISSUES ON WHICH TO CHALLENGE
HIM (SO FAR ITS BEEN ONLY "I CAN DO THE SAME THINGS BETTER"),
WE PREDICT THAT CAMPBELL WILL AGAIN LEAD THE PROVINCIAL
LIBERALS TO VICTORY WITH A LARGE MARGIN. END COMMENT.

8. DRAFTER: R S AYLING

MOORE

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